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## **Denali Commission Head Steps Down**

Jeff Staser, Federal Co-Chair of the Denali Commission since its inception, today announced his resignation from the Commission. Staser said he is leaving because the Commission is ready for a new and different style of leadership.

"I'm honored and proud to have served this Commission. At the beginning, we couldn't know whether this idea would work. It has worked incredibly well, thanks to a spirit of cooperation and transparency that has permeated all of our work. Through effective collaboration we've built well over 100 energy projects, completed over 56 health clinics with 30 more under construction this summer, and delivered dozens of other public infrastructure facilities. The Commission transformed "sustainability" from a murky concept to the forefront of public discourse."

Ninety-seven percent of the funds provided by Congress have gone into rural energy, health, teacher housing, domestic violence shelters, training and other programs affecting almost every community in Alaska. Along the way, the Commission garnered about 50/50 cost sharing. Staser attributes the success of the Commission to its many governmental partner agencies, the Rasmuson Foundation, and local leadership.

"It's all about working together, Alaskans helping Alaskans. We've proven what we can accomplish through effective teamwork. And we all share a sense of pride in our accomplishments."

The Denali Commission was created by federal law in 1998 to deliver the services of the Federal Government in the most cost-effective manner practicable by reducing administrative and overhead costs, and to provide job training, infrastructure and other economic development services in rural communities, particularly distressed communities. Since then, it has grown to an annual budget of about \$135,000,000.

Staser's resignation was made in a formal letter to U.S. Senator Ted Stevens, who as author of the Act and by virtue of his role as president pro tem of the U.S. Senate, is charged with nominating the Federal Co-Chair. The law that created the Denali Commission stipulates that the Federal Co-Chair heads the Commission staff. It further provides for the Governor to serve as State Co-Chair and five statewide organizations to provide Commissioners: the AFL-CIO, University of Alaska, Alaska Federation of Natives, Alaska Municipal League and the Associated General Contractors of Alaska.

More information about the Commission and all its projects are available at [www.denali.gov](http://www.denali.gov).